

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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P 200923Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6194
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 806

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ID VS
SUBJ: DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN FONMIN MALIK AND AMBASSADOR MARTIN

SUMMARY: DURING TWO HOUR MEETING JAN 18 FONMIN MALIK
AND HIS ASSOCIATES EXPRESSED TO AMB MARTIN INDONESIAN
CONCERNS RE FUTURE OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND THEIR ROLE IN ICCS.
AMB MARTIN GAVE BROAD ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE OF
SOUTH VIETNAM MILITARILY, POLITICALLY, DIPLOMATICALLY
AND ECONMICALLY AND OF US SUPPORT FOR GVN AND ICCS,
STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUED INDONESIAN PARTICIPATION
IN ICCS. INDONESIAN SIDE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION
FOR AMB MARTIN'S VIEWS, BUT MADE NO SPECIFIC COMMENTS
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER RE GOI'S FUTURE ICCS STANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. AT INVITATION OF FONMIN MALIK, AMB MARTIN ARRIVED
JAKARTA JAN 18 FOR EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SENIOR
FONDEPT OFFICIALS AND, SEPARATELY, OTHERS INTERESTED
IN INDONESIA'S ICCS INVOLVEMENT. FOR TWO HOUR MEETING
LATE AFTERNOON JAN 18 MALIK ASSEMBLED FULL FONDEPT
TEAM CONSISTING OF DIRGEN FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
DJAJADININGRAT; DIRGEN FOR SECURITY AFFAIRS MAJGEN

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NURMATHIAS; CHIEF, ASIA PACIFIC DIRECTORATE BRIGEN

ADENAN; MALIK'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT ALEX ALATAS; CHIEF, AMERICAN DIRECTORATE KUSUMASMORO; FONDEPT SPOKESMAN NANA SUSTRESNA AND ASIA PACIFIC INDOCHINA HEAD MOMON. AMBASSADORS MARTIN AND NEWSOM WERE ACCOMPANIED BY DCM TOUSSAINT, POLITICAL OFFICER POLGAR FROM SAIGON, SPEC ASST SHIMA AND POLCOUNS MONJO.

2. MALIK OPENED BY STATING GOI CONSIDERS INDOCHINA SITUATION "SERIOUS", THAT RECENT INDONESIAN SEA CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE HAD DISCUSSED SUBJECT AND THAT, GIVEN INDONESIA'S ICCS INVOLVEMENT, VIETNAM IS NOW "FOCUS" OF GOI'S ATTENTION. HE SAID THAT, IN GOI VIEW, (A) IN NEAR FUTURE MAJOR NVN OFFENSIVE IN SVN UNLIKELY BUT THAT THERE WILL BE SERIES OF SMALL OFFENSIVES IN REGIONS TO DESTROY THE GVN; (B) GVN RELIES TOO MUCH ON US AND NOT ENOUGH ON OWN STRENGTH; AND (C) IMPORTANT QUESTION ARE "HOW TO FIND A WAY OUT" AND "IS THERE A WAY OUT" WHILE EXPRESSING HOPE THERE WILL BE A RETURN TO PARIS AGREEMENTS WHICH, SO FAR, HAVE FAILED.

3. AMBASSADOR MARTIN, IN RESPONSE, STATED THAT IN US VIEW NVN CURRENT OFFENSIVE MAY NOT BE AS DRAMATIC AS THAT IN 1972 BUT COULD BE AS INTENSE. IN SHAPING OFFENSIVE, HANOI WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ITS ESTIMATE OF (A) CONSTANCY OF GVN ALLIES, ESPECIALLY US BACKING; (B) STRENGTH OF GVN ARMED FORCES; AND (C) SUPPORT FOR GVN OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. WHEN HANOI DECIDES OFFENSIVE WILL NOT SUCCEED WE WILL SEE ITS CURTAILMENT.

4. AMB MARTIN NOTED THAT AT TIME OF CEASEFIRE: NORTH VIETNAM HAD TWO YEARS' SUPPLIES OF MILITARY MATERIEL IN PLACE WHILE SOUTH VIETNAM HAD ONLY 30-60 DAYS. NOW, HOWEVER, THERE IS EVIDENCE USSR AND PRC CURTAILING MILITARY ASSISTANCE (WHILE INCREASING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE). JUDGING FROM THEIR OWN VIOLENT COMPLAINTS, IT IS LOGICAL TO ASSUME NVN FEELS IT HAS NO ASSURANCE OF AUTOMATIC RESUPPLY. HENCE THEY MAY BE RELUCTANT GAMBLE ALL THEIR SUPPLIES, AND ONCE CURRENT OFFENSIVE HAS USED UP ABOUT HALF OF EXISTING MATERIEL, WE COULD SEE AN EASING OFF. WITHOUT IMPORTANT NVN MILITARY ACTION
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IN SVN, VIET CONG WOULD POSE NO PROBLEM FOR GVN.

5. ON POLITICAL SIDE GVN STRONGER THAN GENERALLY RECOGNIZED ABROAD. WAVE OF DISSENT IN FALL OF 1974 WAS OVER-REPORTED; NUMBERS WERE SMALL AND OPPOSITION LACKS COHESION. FACT THAT GVN CONTAINED SITUATION WITHOUT REPRESSION IS REFLECTION OF REGIME'S STRENGTH. GVN HAS TAKEN MANY FORWARD LOOKING STEPS, SUCH AS

MASSIVE LAND REFORM PROGRAM, FOR WHICH IT GETS CREDIT AT HOME BUT LITTLE ABROAD. THIEU WON TWICE IN ELECTIONS MOST OBSERVERS ACKNOWLEDGED FREE, AND WOULD BE CHOSEN BY 80 PERCENT OF PEOPLE IF RAN TOMORROW.

6. ON DIPLOMATIC SIDE AMB MARTIN ACKNOWLEDGED GVN WITH ITS "MIDDLE KINGDOM" COMPLEX DOES NOT MAKE SUFFICIENT EFFORTS TO PROJECT GOOD IMAGE ABROAD, ALTHOUGH SOME IMPROVEMENT BEING MADE. HANOI, ON OTHER HAND, MOUNTS MASSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL PROPAGANDA EFFORTS THROUGH WORLD COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PRESS. PRG IS HANOI APPARATUS WHICH IS NOW SEEKING TO FIND A CAPITAL AND OTHER TRAPPINGS OF NATIONHOOD. EVEN COMMUNISTS ONLY CLAIM PRG CONTROLS 12 PERCENT OF SVN POPULATION; WE CALCULATE 2 PERCENT PLUS 5-6 PERCENT IN CONTESTED AREAS. QUESTION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES LARGELY MANUFACTURED SINCE SVN RELATIVELY OPEN AND LIBERTIES CALLED FOR IN PARIS AGREEMENT WERE TO FOLLOW REAL CEASEFIRE DELIMITATION OF AREAS OF CONTROL, FORMATION OF NCNRC, AND THEN ONLY PRECEDE ELECTIONS.

7. AS REGARDS US-GVN RELATIONSHIP, IN PAST TWO YEARS BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND DECISIONS HAVE BEEN IN HANDS GVN, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS THIS WAS NOT THE CASE EARLIER. WE HAVE, OF COURSE, PROVIDED SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID AND ARE CONTINUING TO DO SO. CONCERN NOW EXISTS AS TO US RESUPPLYING GVN MILITARY NEEDS--WHICH WAS IN PART REASON THAT GVN HAS HUSBANDED MILITARY MATERIEL AND NOT DEFENDED OUTLYING AREAS SUCH AS PHUOC LONG. ADMINISTRATION WILL ASK CONGRESS FOR \$300 MILLION SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION. WITH THIS SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT WE FEEL SURE THAT GVN CAN HOLD FIRM.

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EXDIS

8. TOUCHING ON CHOICE WHICH WILL FACE HANOI WHEN IT SEES MILITARY VICTORY NOT IN CARDS, AMB MARTIN OBSERVED THAT, WHILE SOME HARDLINERS SUCH AS LE DUC THO WILL NEVER ABANDON DREAM OF HANOI HEGEMONY OVER INDOCHINA, YOUNGER TECHNICALLY TRAINED NORTH VIETNAMESE WISH TO GET ON WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IMPORTANT ELEMENT IS ATTITUDE OF MOSCOW AND PEKING; IT NOW EVIDENT

NEITHER RUSSIA NOR CHINA FEELS IT IN ITS NATIONAL INTEREST TO SEE HANOI DOMINATE ALL OF INDOCHINA, WHICH HAS BEEN REFLECTED IN SHIFT AWAY FROM MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

9. AMB MARTIN POINTED OUT SOUTH VIETNAM'S LONGER TERM FAVORABLE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS. GVN HAS ALREADY CURBED RAMPANT INFLATION, AND US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR THIS YEAR INCREASED BY \$100 MILLION THUS IMPROVING INTERMEDIATE PICTURE. IN LONGER RUN, WHEN LEVEL OF FIGHTING FALLS OFF, SOUTH VIETNAM HAS CHANCE OF BECOMING MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTER, NOT TO MENTION HOPEFUL SIGNS OF OIL.

10. TALKING THESE FACTORS INTO CONSIDERATION AMB MARTIN
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SAID THAT IT IS OUR ESTIMATE THAT THERE IS NO CHANCE NVN WILL PREVAIL MILITARILY, AND THAT WHEN THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE HAD USED ABOUT HALF COMMUNIST MILITARY MATERIEL IN PLACE--WITH LITTLE CHANCE OF REPLENISHMENT GIVEN MOSCOW AND PEKING POLICIES--HANOI WOULD SCALE DOWN THE FIGHTING. WE COULD WELL SEE NOT TOTAL PEACE, BUT A "VAST DEESCALATION" WITH A TACIT ACCEPTANCE OF THE STATUS QUO IN SOUTH VIETNAM WITH NORTH VIETNAMESE RETAINING GROUND MAINLY IN HIGHLANDS. WITH THIS EXPECTATION PRESENCE ICCS IMPORTANT AND COULD BECOME CRITICAL 4 OR 5 MONTHS FROM NOW AND FOR ENSUING YEAR OR SO AFTERWARDS.

11. IN EXCHANGE WHICH FOLLOWED AMB MARTIN'S PRESENTATION, THE FOLLOWING THEMES EMERGED:

(A) NURMATHIAS, REITERATING COMMENTS OFTEN MADE IN GOI CIRCLES, STATED THAT MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE SEEMS TO REST WITH NORTH, WHILE THIEU

GOVERNMENT CANNOT GET PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING GVN'S WEAKNESS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS, AMB MARTIN POINTED OUT THAT TWO YEARS AFTER US PULLOUT, GVN HAS ACHIEVED CONSIDERABLE MILITARY AND POLITICAL PROGRESS, AND THAT ATTITUDES ELSEWHERE TOWARDS GVN UNDERGOING FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT.

(B) ADENAN TOUCHED LARGELY ON ICCS PROBLEM, NOTING POSSIBLE DANGER TO INDONESIAN CONTINGENT, FRUSTRATIONS WHICH MAKE RECRUITING DIFFICULT, AND FINANCING DIFFICULTIES. AMB MARTIN REPLIED THAT, WHILE HANOI WOULD TRY TO AVOID AN INCIDENT INVOLVING ICCS CASUALTIES, IT IMPOSSIBLE TO GUARANTEE THERE WILL NOT BE AN INCIDENT. US WOULD CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND IF INDONESIAN ICCS CHIEF GEN SUHUD TEMPORARILY WITHDREW A TEAM FROM DANGEROUS AREA. ON FINANCING PROBLEM USG HAS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE LINE ITEM IN AUTHORIZATION ACT AND IS NOW WORKING TO OBTAIN APPROPRIATIONS. GVN CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD TIDE OVER ITERIM PERIOD. ARRIVAL OF NEW IRANIAN DELEGATION CHIEF, WHO NOW AMBASSADOR IN BANGKOK AND FORCEFUL MAN, SHOULD PROVE HELPFUL TO INDONESIA IN MAINTAINING USEFUL ICCS POSTURE.

(C) MALIK NOTED, WITH SOME PERPLEXITY, THAT GVN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPRESENTATIVE NANG HAD EARLIER SAME DAY MADE DEMARCHE ASKING INDONESIA TO SECRET

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CONDUCT UNILATERAL INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENTS, INDICATING THERE WAS SOME URGENCY. MALIK SAID HE HAD REPLIED IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT GIVEN SITUATION AND ICCS RULES. AMB MARTIN SUGGESTED THAT ARRIVAL OF NEW IRANIAN DELEGATION CHIEF WOULD PERMIT TWO COUNTRIES TO WORK TOGETHER MORE EFFECTIVELY, ADDING HE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY MALIK WOULD NOT HAVE WISHED INDONESIAN ICCS CONTINGENT TO BE ONLY ONE TO ENGAGE IN UNILATERAL ACTION.

12. AT THE VERY END MALIK NOTED THAT HE HAD SEEN PRESIDENT SUHARTO SAME MORNING AND SUHARTO HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN SVN AND GAVE OPINION GVN MUST NOT LET COMMUNISTS CONSOLIDATE FOLLOWING PHOUOC LONG BUT ALSO MUST NOT BE DRAWN IN UNWISELY. AMB MARTIN REPLIED THAT THIE AGREES AND DOES NOT WISH COMMUNISTS TO CHOOSE TERRAIN AND TIME WHERE TWO SIDES WILL FIGHT; HE THOUGH VERY SHORTLY WE WOULD SEE THAT COMMUNISTS WILL BE HIT HARD. MALIK THEN CONCLUDED SUHARTO WANTED TO BE SURE NO INDONESIAN ICCS MEMBERS WERE HURT.

13. AMB MARTIN WILL SEE KEY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS JAN 21 BEFORE DEPARTURE. INITIAL MEETING WITH MALIK AND ASSOCIATES PROVIDED FULL EXPOSURE INDONESIAN CONCERNS AND EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY PUT MORE POSITIVE SIDE

OF PICTURE BEFORE INDONESIANS. FULL ASSESSMENT IMPACT OF VISIT ON
PRESENT AND FUTURE INDONESIAN DECISIONS POSSIBLE ONLY AFTER
FURTHER ANTICIPATED CONVERSATIONS.
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